

Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE 2004		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2004 to 00-00-2004	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Stabilizing Critical Infrastructure Tour Lengths				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) CADRE/AR,Director, Airpower Research Institute,401 Chennault Circle,Maxwell AFB,AL,36112-6428				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 2	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

CADRE Quick-Look

Catalyst for Air & Space Power Research Dialogue



Stabilizing Critical Infrastructure Tour Lengths

Douglas E. Lee

Problem: While the aerospace expeditionary force (AEF) tour length works well for most personnel supporting a deployment, there are specific areas where the concept is more detrimental than beneficial. Tour lengths in those areas should be reconsidered.

Discussion: The Air Force Scientific Advisory Board defines the aerospace expeditionary force as an adaptable and rapidly employable set of air and space assets that provide the President, Secretary of Defense and combatant commanders with options for missions ranging from humanitarian airlift to combat operations.¹ The AEF concept has ten prepackaged combat units, using airmen assigned to a regular unit, which rotate every three months over a fifteen-month period.² Currently, there are airmen serving in critical career fields (i.e., intelligence, security, combat engineering) that are remaining beyond the normal 90-day cycle, extending their tours up to 179 days.³

As AEF units rotate, key functions lose expertise vital to long-term US goals. One example is USCENTCOM's Combined Air Operation Center, located on Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar. There is a mixture of tour lengths—normally one-year tours for senior leadership and 90–120 day tours for staff. This CAOC supports the combined force commander's objectives for three disparate geographical areas—Afghanistan, Iraq, and Horn of Africa. While personnel are trained prior to assuming their duties at the CAOC, several issues exist that extend their “spin up” time:

- Understanding and establishing relationships with other commands (e.g., USCENTCOM and CJTFs). This process is more complicated when the CAOC is supporting more than one operation.
- Learning issues unique to AOR not normally supported by an AEF unit. While 9th AF understands issues associated within Southwest Asia, 12th AF's AOR is normally USSOUTHCOM, with which there is little commonality.
- Filtering information during a tour is personality driven. An incumbent will categorize what is important based on individual expertise and pass that information on to their successor, potentially overlooking other areas considered low priority. On long tours, replacement personnel have an opportunity to learn all aspects of their job, while the changeover brief is more critical for short tours.

Possible Courses of Action:

1. Extend tours for all personnel supporting critical mission requirements to one-year remotes, using a quarterly or biannual rotation cycle. This concept would reduce the acclimation time by seventy-five percent. Assuming it takes 4-6 weeks to establish a learning curve, three to four months can be converted from learning to production time during a yearlong remote. If remote tours are established, a feeder system could also be established where airmen must spend at least a year in the numbered air force that supports the AOR. Also, perform a personnel review to identify potential billet that can be filled in a “virtual” mode.

2. Develop a personnel plan that identifies airmen for a primary combatant command and either a secondary combat command or functional unified command. With diverse characteristics in each theater, a deliberate development plan that exposes airmen to the unique conditions in an AOR for multiple tours will produce subject matter experts in all fields—from support to operations. A secondary combatant command path will help ease manpower requirements from a long-term presence in a given theater. Cross-pollination with the functional commands ensures a contemporary war-fighting focus is maintained in that command.

3. Create a phased approach for emerging areas that will require a long-term US presence. Another disruption to the AEF process is areas that expand from an expeditionary to a “permanent” commitment. Developing a phased plan provides a roadmap that ensures personnel actions can be performed in a timely manner while preserving the flexibility inherent in the AEF for truly expeditionary contingencies.

- a. Phase 0 (expeditionary force presence): AEF deployment cycle assets during peacetime operations.
- b. Phase I (up to 3 years): Transition to one-year tours as the commitment expands, ensuring continuity and proficiency are not degraded.
- c. Phase II (3 to 5 years): Begin command sponsored permanent change of station (PCS) and unaccompanied tours as the infrastructure expands.
- d. Phase III (5 years +): Convert all billets to PCS status.

¹ United States Air Force Scientific Advisory Board, *Report on United States Air Expeditionary Forces*, Volume 1: “Summary,” SAB-TR-07-01, November 1997, p vii.

² John T. Correll. “The EAF in Peace and War,” *Air Force Magazine*, July 2002 Vol. 85, No. 07. <http://www.afa.org/magazine/July2002/0702eaf.asp>

³ George Cahlink. “Air Force extends deployments indefinitely,” *GovExec.com*, 19 February 2003. <http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0203/021903g1.htm>.